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LINCOLN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SLAVERY
AND THE SOUTH.

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In the long list of Presidents of the United States there is one who especially commands our attention as rendering a peculiar service to our country at a time of great need. Abraham Lincoln has often been called the "savior" of his country because he preserved it as a unified whole, guiding the nation safely thru the critical period. His was a unique task for which, it seems, he had been particularly trained during his entire life and was, no doubt, the one man of the whole nation to steer the ship of State thru the terrible storm. Just why and how he was able to do this is a subject too comprehensive to be dealt with in this thesis. However, one of the chief reasons for his ability in being successful in his administration may be here, to a limited extent, considered, namely, his understanding of and attitude toward the South and its institutions. The greatest contrast between Lincoln and the other great men of his day is on this very question. Had Lincoln not understood the South as he did, he could not, very likely, have led the nation to victory.

A. Early Training and Characteristics.

In considering the position which Lincoln took on this topic during his presidency, it is well to see what was his former training and just what influence that had on his later attitude. In the first place, he was born in Kentucky so that he early became acquainted with Southern customs and the thoughts of the Southern people. His schooling consisted chiefly in studying the Book of Life. His parents being poor, he came to understand the feelings of that class and always, in later life, showed

great consideration for the common people.

As settlers began to move in with their slaves it became hard on the poor whites, whereupon Lincoln's father decided to move. Thomas Lincoln was too poor to own slaves and altho he may not have had any special dislike for slavery he felt its effects in his work so moved north into Indiana where slavery had been forever prohibited. Here he could rear his little family without having to strive with poverty as he must necessarily have done in Kentucky. However, it was no easy lot out there in the wilderness miles from anyone. We thus see that Abraham's early training was left chiefly to his parents who strove to impress religious truths upon his young mind. Abraham thus became early acquainted with the Bible, it being one of the few books which he studied as a boy.

Besides studying the Scriptures in book form, Lincoln had a good opportunity to see the wonderful workings of that Book in the world about him. That life of freedom and purity so impressed him that he never could be content to see anyone or anything oppressed or dealt with unjustly. He was accustomed to seeing nature in its unrestricted and beautiful life and always loved the animals and fowls of the woods. He was of such a sympathetic nature that he would not kill game of any kind except when the family needed meat. This quality was carried all thru life and we have incidents showing his sympathy, such as, putting baby birds back in their nests, helping a pig out of the mire, and so on, the same feeling of sorrow for those in trouble extending to the realm of humanity. Striking incidents are told of how he would inconvenience himself to help an old friend or e-

ven a stranger in need.

He lived in the midst of an imaginative and superstitious people which made him keen and sensitive to his surroundings. Some of the other books which influenced his life and action to a great extent were Aesop's Fables, Pilgrim's Progress, and the Life of Washington which helped him to form his first ideas of right and wrong, and the last named book inspired him with patriotism and a burning desire to be of service to his country for which that great man had given so much. He searched for an explanation of the fervor and determination with which the father of the republic endured hardships and then he plunged manfully into the desperate struggle.

Lincoln's predominating characteristic was thoroughness in everything he did. He never tackled anything too difficult to master; he digged to the very bottom before leaving it. In delivering a eulogy on Henry Clay he said that the one thing to be learned from Clay's life was that nothing was too hard to tackle. This advise he followed for a life time, resulting in his being thoroughly acquainted with politics, the needs of the people, vital questions of the hour, and led to his becoming so well informed concerning the Southern people and their particular industries. His acquaintance with the questions of the hour is shown by the fact that he was called upon to discuss these questions at public gatherings and was always the center of attraction in any social gathering and in the country stores where topics were discussed.

Another of Lincoln's striking characteristics was his wonderful understanding of human nature. He came to understand

the attitudes, feelings, and desires of all classes of people from the lowest to the highest. His exceptional ability in dealing with men was a result of this knowledge.

Lincoln, upon hearing Mr. Breckenridge's speech decided that he would like to become an orator. His usual custom of keeping at things until he mastered them brought him success in this instance, and he became such a good speaker that his father said there was no use to try to get anyone to work when Abs was going to talk, because they all flocked to hear him. At one time at one of his speeches, he held his audience so spell bound that the reporters forgot to take notes.

We have been viewing a few of the peculiar conditions and traits which will help us to see how all his former life fitted him for the position which he so ably filled. Having lived in the South, he would understand the conditions; his early religious training gave him definite conceptions of right and wrong; his life in the open in nature made him appreciate freedom for all, both among animals and in the realm of humanity; his imaginativeness gave him the ability to put himself in another man's place, and the ability to see the results of a theory before put into practice; his study of the Life of Washington gave him an ideal statesman to imitate and created within him an enthusiastic patriotism for his country; his practice of thoroughness caused the formation of a habit of knowing absolutely what he was about to undertake; his acquisition of information on the questions of the hour helped him to see remedies and cures for evil practices and improvements for others; his understanding of humanity equipped him with ability to see thru the external enabling him to judge cor-

rectly in his dealings; and then his power of expression enabled him to convey his thoughts to his listeners who could not but help be convinced of his earnestness. Of course Lincoln's attitude toward the South cannot be fully comprehended without learning his attitude toward slavery and its relation to his actions.

B. Trip to New Orleans.

Up until the time of his trip to New Orleans his chief knowledge was of himself and his own abilities, but from then on he began to study others and the outside world. We have no special records of his first trip except that his vision was enlarged and he acquired the desire to know more about those distant parts. It is very likely, however, that he observed the work of the negroes on the plantations, as he floated down the river, stopping here and there along the way. On his second trip, at the age of nineteen, he had time and opportunity to observe more closely the effects of slavery. He saw boats loaded with slaves who were penned up in small cells, and he saw the slave market where men, women, and children of one family were sold out to different parts of the country, and it made such an impression upon him that he exclaimed, "If ever I get a chance to hit that thing I will hit it hard" and he was true to this outburst of his sentiment. This is his first expression of his idea concerning slavery and he now began to study the question from all points of view.

Not much is said of Lincoln's dealing with slavery until his election to the Illinois legislature in 1834, however, we are not to think for a moment that he at all lacked interest in the question or was indifferent to the study of it. Denton Offutt, Lincoln's former employer, said that Lincoln knew more than

any other man in the United States. This shows the breadth of his knowledge.

II. MAIN BODY.

A. In the Illinois Legislature.

During his first years of experience in the legislature, Lincoln was not very prominent as a leader, but he never failed to express himself as an adherent of the best measures if he deemed it necessary. He was of the minority party, Whig, but contended strongly for their principles never dreaming of compromising a thing he believed right to gain advancement in politics.

*An instance is recorded of the protest of himself and Dan Stone, a representative from Sangamon County, against a resolution on slavery that was passed in 1837 by the legislature. He gave his reasons for not sanctioning the measure, even though it was little noticed at the time, it expressed his sentiment as believing that even though Congress could not legally abolish slavery, slavery was founded on both injustice and bad policy. This is the outline of the platform upon which Lincoln stood and fought out the great anti-slavery battle. From this time forward he worked for the abolition of that blighting institution.

B. Lincoln as a Fugitive -Slave Lawyer.

Lincoln had an excellent opportunity as a lawyer to learn much about slavery, and it was his delight to take a case which others would not, but in which he knew he was in the right. In 1841, an instance is given of his ability in handling a case concerning the selling of a negro girl. The note given for payment of the girl was not met when due, whereupon the former owner of the girl sued the man for the money. Lincoln, by his force-

(*Life, Works, and Public Services of Abraham Lincoln, H. Barrett.)

ful arguments for the merits of the case according to the constitution, caused the jury to decide the case in his favor contrary to a former law passed in the state. In all his work as a lawyer, Lincoln never took a case that he knew to be in the wrong. His charges were always small, in some cases, nothing, because his chief object in life was to do what he could to establish absolute justice.

Another incident is told of Lincoln's interest in the case of a negro boy whose parents, having been slaves of a Mr. Hinkle in the South, were freed upon entering the Northwest Territory. This boy went on a trip to New Orleans where he was taken prisoner by negro dealers who sent to his friends for a fine to have him released. Lincoln, hearing of the case, tried to find a way for the boy's release but, finding none, went to the governor asking him to get the boy. Upon the governor's answer that he had no constitutional right to interfere in that or any other State in the matter, Lincoln exclaimed, "By the Almighty, I'll have that negro back soon or I'll have twenty years of excitement in Illinois until the Governor does have a legal and constitutional right to do something in these premises."* This conveys some idea of how terribly in earnest Lincoln was in what he was trying to do and how tremendously interested he was in seeing the right triumph even tho it might not have touched him personally at all.

He was not afraid to undertake any fugitive slave case and came to be known all over the country for his success in such instances, even tho public sentiment was against abolition.

C. In Congress.

Lincoln was not fond of political life, and after a per-

(*Holland's Life of Lincoln, p. 127.)

ied of retirement was only induced to accept candidacy for Congress because he strongly disapproved some measures that had been passed concerning the Mexican War, slavery, etc., and felt it his duty to do his part to establish justice. Altho his party was in the minority in Congress at his first election, this time his influence and attitude against slavery were being felt and he was now the unquestioned "big leader." He became the ablest orator and debater of the House and was feared by other party leaders.

For a brief period he again retired but soon the Dred Scott Decision, the Compromise of 1850, and the Kansas Nebraska Bill so fired him with a sense of injustice and wrong that he could no longer remain quietly at home, but, at every opportunity, made speeches against these measures, and against candidates upholding them, and spoke with ardent enthusiasm for candidates of his own party disapproving such views.

D. Views on Slavery in Kansas.

In a letter to Mr. Speed, a Southern friend, Lincoln sets forth his attitude toward slavery in Kansas very forcefully, he says, "I acknowledge your rights and my obligations under the constitution, in regard to your slaves, I confess I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down, and caught and carried back to their stripes and unrequited toil; but I bite my lip, and keep quiet. . . . I do oppose the extension of slavery, because my judgment and feelings so prompt me. . . . If Kansas fairly votes herself a slave state, she must be admitted, or the Union must be dissolved. But how if she votes herself a slave state unfairly? . . . Must she still be admitted, or the Union dissolve? That will be the phase of the question when

(*Holland's Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 143.)

it first becomes a practical one. . . . I look upon that enactment (Nebraska law) not as a law but as a violence, from the beginning. . . . I now do no more than oppose the extension of slavery. . . . How can anyone who abhors the oppression of the negroes be in favor of degrading classes of white people? . . . As a nation, we began by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it 'all men are created equal except negroes.'

I. Joining the Republican Party.

Up to this time Lincoln had considered himself a Whig but realizing that the party was dying and that the great question was the slavery question, that any opposition to the extension of slavery was necessarily sectional, in 1855 he became interested in the Bloomington convention held for those who opposed the democratic party. Here the republican party of Illinois was organized, a platform adopted, and delegates appointed to National Republican Convention. From the date of this meeting, Lincoln felt himself more a free man in politics than ever before. His hatred of slavery had been constantly growing, and now he was the member of a party whose avowed purpose it was to resist the extension of slavery, and to shut it up in the territory where it held its only rights under the Constitution. Lincoln was now regarded, not only by the republicans of Illinois, but by all the western states, as their first man. In one of his speeches he showed what free institutions had done for him and exhibiting the evils of slavery to the white man wherever it existed, asked if it was not natural that he should hate slavery, and agitate against it. "Yes," he said, "we will speak for freedom and a-

against slavery, as long as the constitution of our country guarantees free speech, until everywhere on this wide land, the sun shall shine and the rain shall fall and the wind shall blow upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil."

F. The Lincoln-Douglas Struggle.

From this time to the close of his life, he was almost entirely absorbed by political affairs. During the summer succeeding the presidential canvass, Douglass delivered a speech at Springfield in which he showed the progress he had made in his departure from the doctrines of the fathers, by announcing that the framers of the Declaration of Independence, when they asserted that "all men were created equal" only meant to say that "British subjects on this continent were equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain." Lincoln, in an answering speech, showed the absurdity of such an interpretation, telling his auditors that as they were preparing to celebrate the Fourth of July, and as they would read the Declaration, he would like to have them read it in Judge Douglas' way, i. e.: "... . that all British subjects who were on this continent eighty one years ago, were created equal to all British subjects born and then residing in Great Britain. *And now I appeal to all--are you really willing that the Declaration shall thus be frittered away--thus left no more than an interesting memorial of the dead past? thus shorn of its vitality and its practical value, and left without the germ or even the suggestion of the inalienable rights of man in it?"

As Douglas's term in the Senate drew to a close, he realized that he must do something to effect the accusations upon

(*Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Nicolay and Hay.)

him of the Kansas Nebraska situation. He had divided his own party in his own state and was now losing confidence as to his own political future. Because of Douglas' inconsistent statements to gain his ambitious ends in such unscrupulous ways, Lincoln decided to bring him to an absolute "show-down" as to his exact political principles. This he was very successful in doing in the remarkable Lincoln - Douglas Debates in 1858, wherein Douglas declared that he did not care whether slavery was voted up or voted down, that it was the people's duty in a territory to decide whether or not slavery should exist in that part of the country. These statements of his exact position on the slavery question were forced from Douglas at the noted debate at Freeport during which Lincoln proposed a number of questions to be answered by Douglas. This is the famous question Lincoln proposed, "Can the people of a United States Territory, under the Dred Scott decision, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits, prior to the formation of a State constitution?" Douglas' answer that the people could exclude slavery in a Territory caused a falling away of the Democratic followers. *Lincoln thus exposed the sham of "Popular Sovereignty" in the Territories when taken with the Dred Scott Decision, summing the whole miserable sophism up in a single sentence, calling it the doctrine which taught "that a thing may be lawfully driven away from where it has a lawful right to be."

It is well to note a few important statements in the speech of acceptance of nomination for Senator,—"A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot

(*Civil War and the Constitution Vol. I., Burgess, p 24.)

...permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved--I do not expect the house to fall--but I do expect it will cease to be divided." These statements were unfairly misrepresented by Douglas in a speech in Chicago. The next evening Lincoln answered in such a way as convinced his hearers that he had been absolutely misjudged. At the end of the debates Douglas' doom was sealed so far as receiving votes from the South, and altho he was re-elected to the Senate thru aid of the North, his position was made so absolutely clear that the South would never uphold him again.

G. Nomination for President.

*Lincoln accepted the nomination for the Presidency only because he believed that the struggle between slavery and the government was soon to reach a crisis and that he had a place to fill in that struggle. Upon Lincoln's nomination, there were threats to break up the Union which threats Lincoln answered by saying that if they did so, theirs would be the blame, and that he expected to treat them as Washington and Jefferson had treated them; that he had no intention to interfere with slavery in the States where it already existed. He also told them that if they expected to gain the election by threats, the election would not be fair.

Lincoln's confidential talk with Newton Bateman, a near friend of his, shows the responsibility which he felt. A canvass of votes had been taken in which three fourths or more of the ministers and so called Christians of Springfield were booked to vote against him. In relation to this he said, "These men well know that I am for freedom in the territories, freedom everywhere

(*Life of Abraham Lincoln, Holland. Page 230.)

as far as the Constitution and laws will permit, and that my opponents are for slavery. They know this and yet, with this Book (Bible) in their hands in the light of which human bondage cannot live a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand it at all." Here he paused for some time, his features tense with emotion. Then he rose and walked up and down the room in the effort to retain his self-possession. Stopping at last, he said, with a trembling voice and cheeks wet with tears: "I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me--and I think He has--I believe I am ready. I am nothing but truth is everything. I know I am right because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and Christ and reason say the same; they will find it so. Douglas don't care whether slavery is voted up or voted down, but God cares, and humanity cares, and I care; and with God's help I shall not fail. I may not see the end, but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bibles aright." Later he said, "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong."

Threats of secession grew louder and deeper. Steps toward treason were bolder with every passing day. He knew the spirit of slavery. He had measured it in all the length and breadth of its malignity and treachery. He felt that he was entering upon a path full of danger, overshadowed with doubt and fear. He believed in his inmost soul that he was an instru-

(*Life of Abraham Lincoln, Holland, p. 237.)

went in the hands of God for the accomplishment of a great purpose.

H. Journey to Washington.

On his way to the Capitol to be inaugurated he made numerous speeches and was given many receptions. One of his most noted speeches on this trip was given at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, in which he declared, "I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. . . . I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together; a sentiment which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but, I hope, to the world for all future time. . . . Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon this basis? . . . If this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it."

After his arrival in Washington, Lincoln talked freely with friends, visited Congress, and was given a reception by the Mayor of the city. In reply to the address of welcome he said that he thought much of the ill feeling existing between those living in free and slave states was owing to their failure to understand one another, and then he assured the Mayor that he did not then entertain, and had never entertained, any other than kindly feelings toward the South, that he had no disposition to treat the people of the South otherwise than as his own neighbors, and that he had no wish to withhold from them any of the benefits of the Constitution.

A day or two later, at the Inaugural, he again reassured

of the South of his friendly feeling by telling them that the property, peace, and security of any section was in no wise endangered by his election and that he should absolutely abide by the Constitution and the laws, declaring that the Union was insoluble and perpetual and that he did not consider any of the states out of the Union.

As President.

A. Attitude in First Inaugural.

"He said, "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." He even declared that fugitive slaves should be delivered up. He said that he took the official oath with no mental reservations and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules; and that he should abide by all the acts of Congress; that there need be no violence or bloodshed, and would be none unless forced upon the national authority; that no constitutional right had been denied to any one; that the majority should rule; that ***If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people." And in closing he said, "In your hands my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. . . . I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it

{ *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. VI. p.6.
** " " " " " " " "

must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as they surely will be, by the better angels of our nature."

B. Attitude Toward the Seceded States.

After a time, people wondered what the President would do in regard to the seceded States. Lincoln was patiently waiting until the South should begin hostilities. He was very anxious that there should be no accusation against him as provoking war. He was especially kind to the Border States telling them again and again that his policy was the preservation of the Union and nothing more. He was criticised for his leniency but he realized the great help that these States would be to the cause. By his determined forbearance, he had thrown the responsibility for the commencement of the war upon the rebel government. Never by word, deed, or declared or concealed intention, had he wronged the South, or denied its rights under the Constitution. By no hostile act had he agitated war. From the time he had first opened his lips as President of the United States, he had breathed none but pacific words. He had claimed the least that he could claim for the government, and still preserve a show of right and power. Upon the heads of the conspirators rested every particle of responsibility for the beginning of war.

*When commissioners came from the South to make a treaty with the government, Lincoln in his firm quiet way gave them a copy of his inaugural and refused to recognise their mission as legal. Douglas was still trying to make himself prominent by advocating compromise, thus expecting to avoid war for the present. (*Life, Speeches and Public Services of A. Lincoln, H. Barrett.)

How it must have grieved the heart of the great President to think that anyone loyal to the Declaration and Constitution could hold for an instant a faint desire of compromise.

However, after the war had actually begun, Douglas visited Lincoln and expressed his deepest desire that the Union should be preserved. And from that time on he was an enthusiastic supporter of the cause of the North.

C. Border State Policy.

There was considerable division in the border states, between the two parties, and in Missouri. General Fremont undertook to settle difficulties by declaring martial law. Lincoln did not like the clause relating to the freeing of the slaves of those in rebellion and the confiscation of their property; accordingly he wrote to Fremont requesting him to modify these sections, fearing that this threat would alarm the Unionists at the South, and perhaps ruin the fair prospect of saving Kentucky to the Union. When asked why he was not more severe with the Border states he said, "What, shall we turn so many bayonets against us?" This shows Lincoln's strong desire above all others, to preserve the Union.

The question of slavery was an ever present one during all the operations of the first year. The South maintained that the President was trying to abolish slavery, while he just as persistently continued to inform them in every manner possible that he had no intention to interfere with slavery in the States. The instructions given by the War Department to General Butler were based upon the desire of the President that all existing rights in all the states shall be respected and maintained. The difficulty of settling the claims of loyal masters was such

(*Holland's Life of Lincoln) (**Messages and Papers of the Pres. Vol. VI

that it was recommended to receive all fugitives, keep a record of them, and set them to work while the masters were to be assured of a just compensation of services thus lost to them.

That Lincoln desired emancipation, none can doubt, but he had undertaken to save the Union under the Constitution--to save the Union while preserving inviolate all the rights of all the states. Whatever might be his hatred of slavery--and it was the intensest passion of his life--he could only interfere with it as a military necessity--an essential means of saving the Union.

D. Dealing with Slavery in the Rebel States.

So we find Lincoln doing his best to make matters as congenial as possible. General Hunter had proclaimed all slaves in South Carolina to be free but this Lincoln made void. As time went on, people were tired of slavery being protested and Lincoln, seeing that emancipation must necessarily come, decided to soften its effects for the Border States. Consequently, he had a resolution introduced into Congress whereby the Border States could, if they desired, gradually emancipate their slaves for which the government would compensate them. The resolution passed but the Border States refused to do any such thing. Before Congress adjourned, Lincoln tried once more to save the Border States from suffering. He called together the representatives and senators from that section and plead passionately with them to give due deliberation to this resolution, showing them how the rebellion and war could be shortened by their move in this direction. Proclaiming that the South could expect no aid from them. Lincoln was sadly disappointed at their refusal to consider such a move.

Politicians and newspapers continued to criticize Lincoln for his slowness in interfering with slavery. Horace Greeley expressed through the New York Tribune, the popular opinion for sweeping emancipation and censured severely the President's position in the matter. To this Lincoln replied "If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do that by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. I would save the Union. I would save it in the shortest way possible under the Constitution."

F. Emancipation Proclamation.

**Lincoln was anxious to take no steps contrary to popular opinion and he was carefully measuring the public sentiment in regard to emancipation. A part of the preliminary work he had accomplished. He had performed with tenderest fidelity all his duty toward the border slave states. He had warned them, besought them, advised them, to get out of the way of an event which he felt certain would come. But they had turned a deaf ear to his warnings and entreaties; and in this manner, if not in the manner desired, took themselves out of his way.

***Accordingly, in September 1862, Lincoln issued a warning proclamation to be followed by a formal Proclamation in the next January. Even this freed only the slaves in the secession States, the far-seeing President still realizing the danger of giving provocation to the Border States. To the complaints of all he logically sustained his position by showing that he was

(*Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Nicolay and Hay.)
 (**Woodrow Wilson's History of the American People, p232.)
 (***)Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. VI. p 157.)

Following the Constitution and his declared policy whereby he had no right to interfere with slavery in the States in the Union ; that it was protected by the laws and he had the right of interference in the other States only because it was a necessity as a war measure. The generals were having great difficulties from this war question and it was time for it to be definitely settled.

Soon afterward Lincoln prepared a message to advise paying the secession States for slaves on condition that they cease fighting. However, he was again disappointed by the refusal of the Cabinet to sanction it. He showed them how much cheaper in both men and money such a course would be but they would not hear to it. His sorrow was very deep at their indifference but because they did not agree with him he would not send the message. He said, "I see you are all opposed to it so I will not send it."

G. Amnesty Proclamation.

Lincoln showed his eagerness to have the South back in its former relation to the Union by his Amnesty Proclamation * declaring that when one tenth of the voters, qualified before war, should form a State government, it should be recognized by the government and the people of such State be free from invasion and the citizens should be protected.

Following this he issued pardons for those who would take an oath to support the Constitution, excepting only the higher officials. He was severely criticised for this magnanimous generosity in dealing with the seceded States. Some thought that the negroes should have suffrage, but Lincoln could not see this. As he had formerly stated his view that because he did

(*Messages and Papers of the Presidents-Vol. VI. p. 312.)

and want a negro for a slave was no reason why he should want her for his wife, he still held to it, knowing that the negro was not ready for the ballot, and seeing the injustice that would be wrought upon the Southern whites by such an action.

He even went farther toward persuading the South to accept his terms by declaring that they need not be hurt by his process of gradual emancipation they could do so. He declared that he had no intention whatever to enslave or exterminate the Southern whites.

Lincoln found it necessary to cause a blockade of Southern ports only in order to shorten the terrible hostilities. He likewise recommended a law preventing foreign slave-traders from acquiring domicile and facilities for their criminal occupation in the United States.

He declared that he had absolutely no prejudice toward the Southern people who were just what the North would be in the same situation; that there were equally good men in both sections, their differences in views arising from the circumstances in which each was placed; that there were Southern men who freed their slaves and Northern men who went South and became cruel slave masters. Thus he was constantly trying to prove his desire to be fair and just "to the North, East, South, and West with no malice to any section" as he had formerly stated before the New York Legislature as his policy.

During his administration, he showed by appointing officers, that he favored the North no more than the South. There a man was from concerned him none at all, but whether or not that

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... for the Union was his chiefest concern. He recognized only two parties, one for the Union and one against it. His plan for Freed Negroes.

Lincoln early began to consider a solution of the negro problem as he worked out after their freedom had been established. He was well aware that they were unequal to the white man in intellect and social standing. He believed in the separation of the two races and considered seriously the idea of colonizing the negroes in Africa or South America. He was disappointed when he found out that it could not successfully be done, but never gave up hope for a better solution. Upon his expression of his fears of the likelihood of the black men in the South arming themselves against the whites after the war, General Butler suggested that they be set to digging the Panama Canal, himself volunteering to undertake the leadership of such an expedition, and expressed his belief that they would then settle there. This plan was heartily approved by Lincoln who told Butler to talk to Seward and after he had made his plans to return. Seward was hurt by accident and before the matter was looked into, Lincoln had been assassinated so that this plan was never carried out.

While Lincoln was always as considerate and generous as possible, he never, for a moment, hinted at compromise, so when Fernando Wood, a Democratic Congressman from New York, advised him to negotiate with the Southern leaders he manifested clearly his position as ready to quit hostilities as soon as the South should recognize the Constitution, but showed that it was the South which must come to terms and not the President. And while the President tried to make it as easy as possible for the

South to quit fighting, he still maintained this position that the Union was in the right so that when the end came there could be no possible doubt as to future conduct.

I. Lenient but firm.

*Lincoln's leniency was further shown by his recommendation that West Virginia be admitted into the Union and that the representatives from Louisiana be admitted to the House.

Lincoln was even merciful, and some thought, conciliatory, toward rebellion sympathizers. This is proven especially in his dealings with Vallandigham, who was arrested and sentenced to prison but the sentence was modified by the President who had him sent to the South. Later he returned and was not molested but because of his abominable action was not able to get many sympathizers.

The President's desire to be just to the South is still more upheld by his desire that the prisoners should be decently cared for.

**His desire for peace was continually prompting him to devise a new means for getting the South to come to terms. So he offered safe conduct to anyone who would bring a proposition embracing the restoration of peace and the abandonment of slavery coming from the authorities in control of armies at war against the United States and added that such a plan would be met on liberal terms on substantial and collateral points. But even this failed to bring response from the Rebel leaders who were determined to have their own way.

J. Second Nomination for President.

(*Burgess' Reconstruction and the Constitution-p 13.)
(**Holland's Life of Lincoln.)

Lincoln's acceptance of the second nomination was in a humble letter of thanks to the people for supporting him, expressing his desire to do as the Almighty directed. He entered upon his second term of office with no over bearing attitude or conceit in his own fitness. He was, however, glad that there were enough Union people to sustain him in the struggle.

K. Second Inaugural.

In his second Inaugural he expresses his tenderest regard for all not even deigning to blame the South for the prolongation of the war, but trying as much as possible, to show that they believed they were right and that God alone should be the judge. He says, "Fondly do we hope--fervently do we pray--that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"^{*} In closing, he stated that world famous saying which so clearly once and for all time showed his generous feeling toward the South, "With malice toward none, with charity for all,- let us strive to bind up the nations wounds,- to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

L. Policy Toward Insurrection Leaders.

After it became certain that the Union would win, some of the officials were inquiring, of Lincoln his policy concerning the Rebel leaders, especially Jeff Davis. ^{**}To their inquiry he

^{*}Speeches of Abraham Lincoln-Mercer Adams-p.411.)
^{**}Life of Lincoln- Holland)

replied that he had no intention of hanging the insurrectionists and would give Jeff Davis a good chance to get out of the country.

There is no end to the stories of his patience and kindness in dealing with the erring South, and his persistent gentleness conquered for him a kindlier feeling on the part of the South. He had braved the criminations and impatience of his friends for his tenderness toward an institution which the Constitution protected. He had been accused of being under the pro-slavery influence of the border states, yet, during all this time, he had entertained the emancipation of the slaves as a measure sure to come just as soon as it could be justified to his own conscience and to history, as a military necessity.

III. CLOSE.

These are but a few of the millions of incidents to show the greatness of the man's mind and the wisdom and justice which he displayed, and upon his death, even the South honestly mourned the loss of the benefactor whom they sorely needed, but had lost forever. Never has a President exemplified such an absolute standard of justice to all in the face of almost overwhelming opposition. Surely he had proven that he acted from the motives which prompted him to say, "Let us at all times remember that all Americans citizens are brothers of a common country and should dwell together in the bonds of fraternal feeling."

As historians look back upon the past, viewing the training of Lincoln in his early life, they cannot but say that this man was truly sent and trained by the Almighty for "such a time" in our nation. And as the lives of other great men of

(*Morgan's Life of Lincoln-pl62.)

that day are studied, we are more profoundly convinced that Abraham Lincoln was the only man in the nation who could so wisely have guided and safe guarded our Constitution and the indestructible Union. So long as men shall live, just so long shall Abraham Lincoln be extolled as the wisest, most prudent, most determined of men and yet the most gentle, kind, and just.

What then was Lincoln's attitude toward slavery and the South? If this question has not already been fully answered let us say in closing that just as the wise and understanding father feels toward the wrong doing of his child and the child, itself, just so was was Lincoln's feeling toward slavery and the South, or even going farther, we would say that just as the heavenly Father hates the sin but loves the sinner, just so Abraham Lincoln hated slavery but loved the blinded South in as full a measure as was his capacity.